



# NEW BARIATRIC AMBULANCE AVAILABLE THROUGH THE EMS AGENCY

By Cathy Chidester

**A** new ambulance designed to handle bariatric patients has been procured by the EMS Agency for Ambulance Services, the division of EMS responsible for the transportation of patients between County health facilities. Because of the increase in the number of bariatric patients, the EMS Agency is making this special ambulance available to the 9-1-1 provider agencies for patient transportation.

This is a longer and wider Type III ambulance, with a sub floor reinforced with space-age polymer and a specialized steel frame. There is also a winch and ramp system to aide in patient loading. The gurney has a 1600-pound weight limit in the lowered position and an 850-pound limit in the mid-level position.

The transfer of bariatric patients can be very difficult and time-consuming due to additional safety concerns and equipment weight restrictions. Often, the extrication and transfer from the patient's home to the appropriate transport vehicle is a lengthy process.

The ambulance is stationed at the EMS Agency in the City of Commerce, with staff available to drive it on a 24/7 basis.

Expect that it may take up to one hour, or slightly longer, for the ambulance to arrive at the scene. In most cases this may not be an issue, since extrication of the patient from the house is often a lengthy process. If your agency finds it necessary to transport a bariatric patient, you may access this vehicle by calling the Central Dispatch Office at (323) 869-0746, press 1 for emergencies. Provide the dispatcher with the name of the agency requesting the ambulance, a contact number, the location and type of patient. The Dispatcher will provide you with an estimated time of arrival.

Use of this ambulance is a public service, without charge. The EMS Agency will provide the staff, who have been orientated to the ambulance operations, to drive the vehicle. It will be necessary for the provider agency's staff to assist with the transfer of the patient from the scene and to the receiving facility, and to continue with the care of the patient.

Any questions regarding the bariatric ambulance should be referred to Mike Mumford, Chief of Ambulance Services at (323) 890-7388 or [mmumford@ladhs.org](mailto:mmumford@ladhs.org).

